



STATE OF WISCONSIN \

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June 06, 2006
For Immediate Release

Wisconsin Heat Awareness Day – June 15, 2006

(MADISON) Gov. Jim Doyle has proclaimed June 15, 2006 as Heat Awareness Day in Wisconsin. The campaign is to remind people of the dangers associated with extreme heat and humidity, and to encourage citizens to take protective safety measures.

Since 1986, several killer heat waves affected most of Wisconsin resulting in 112 direct, heat-related deaths and an additional 94 indirect, heat-related deaths, and several hundred heat-related illnesses. Summer heat waves have been the biggest weather-related killers in Wisconsin for the past 50 years, far exceeding tornadoes, severe storms, flash floods, and lightning combined.

To encourage citizens to be prepared for severe heat and humidity, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and the National Weather Service offers these tips to keep safe in hot weather:

1. **Never leave children, disabled persons, or pets in a parked car – even briefly.** Temperatures in a car can become life threatening within minutes, and may ultimately become 40 degrees warmer than the outside air temperature.
2. **Keep your living space cool.** Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don't have an air conditioner, open windows to let air circulate. When it's hotter than 95 degrees, use fans to blow hot air out of the window, rather than to blow hot air on to your body. Basements or ground floors are often cooler than upper floors.
3. **Slow down and limit physical activity.** Plan outings or exertion for the early morning or after dark, when temperatures are usually cooler.

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4. **Drink plenty of water and eat lightly.** Don't wait for thirst, but instead drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid alcohol or caffeine and stay away from hot, heavy meals.
5. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light colored clothing.** Add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool and don't forget sunscreen!
6. **Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should.** Take extra care to stay cool, and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.

Easy ways to cool off include a cool, but not cold bath or shower which actually works faster than an air-conditioner. Applying cold wet rags to the neck, head and limbs also cools down the body quickly.

People at higher risk of a heat-related illness or death include:

- Older adults
- Infants and young children
- People with chronic heart or lung problems
- People with disabilities
- Overweight persons
- Those who work outdoors or in hot settings
- Users of some medications, especially those taken for mental disorders, movement disorder, allergies, depression, and heart or circulatory problems. Some medications prevent some people from perspiring which cools a person
- People that are isolated who don't know when or how to cool off – or when to call for help

Weather Alerts Issued by NOAA's National Weather Service

- **Heat Advisory** – issued for a 24-hour period where heat index reaches 105°-110° for 3 hours or more during daytime and stays at or above 75° at night.
- **Excessive Heat Watch** – issued when excessive heat conditions expected within the next 24 to 48 hours.
- **Excessive Heat Warning** - issued for a 24-hour period where heat index exceeds 110° for 3 hours or more during daytime and stays at or above 80° at night.

For additional information about heat awareness, contact your county emergency management director or the National Weather Service.

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National Weather Service – *Deaths Directly Related to Heat*

